

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	10/1/2023	7/18/2023	

Extraordinary Change Reason

Cruelty and abuse rules should be expanded for the safety and welfare of horses.

Rule Change Intent

When an animal has an injury to its side(s) as a result of spurs and causes raw or bleeding sores, this should be considered cruelty and abuse. Currently, the rules only state that competing with raw or bleeding sores around the coronets, pasterns, or legs is considered cruelty and abuse. A raw or bleeding sore as a result of spurs can be harmful to an animal and should be included within the applicable rules.

Proponent Details

Licensed Officials

Contact Information

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Linked Rules

Comments

Committee Actions

American Saddlebred

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/26/2023

Andalusian/Lusitano

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 04/06/2023

Draft 1: The committee agrees with the intention of this proposal but worries that some accidental cases, such as a horse spooking which cause the rider to grip the horse suddenly and forcefully to prevent falling, may also create raw, broken, and bleeding spots but in no way were caused by abuse. The committee suggests the wording be re-worked to include "excessive use" or "inappropriate use". The committee also suggests this language be included within the Steward/TD rules to clearly communicate that they have the ability to eliminate exhibitors for these issues.

Arabian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/28/2023

Draft 1: While the committee agreed with the proposal, they did recommend that language regarding "benefit of the doubt" be considered for instances when it is not clear what the raw/broken/bleeding area was caused by.

Carriage Pleasure Driving

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/29/2023

Competition Management

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 04/04/2023

Draft 1: The committee supports safety & welfare but the wording and how it is listed under cruelty & abuse is not supported by the committee

Connemara

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/04/2023

Draft 1: The committee approved the proposal but would like to also recommend that the language "spurs and/or whips" be considered for adoption.

Council - Intl Discipline

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 04/04/2023

Draft 1: The IDC supports rules put forward concerning horse welfare and safety. However, it is felt that there are issues that need to be addressed: 1) need to stay away from saying that the use of spurs is considered abuse; 2) language throughout the various breeds or discipline rules, already address the appropriate action to take making this rule change unnecessary; 3) and the word raw should not be included because a horse can have a scar, a rub, or raw, broken or bleeding skin which can be caused by something unrelated to the use of spurs and wouldn't otherwise be considered abuse. Additionally, there are possible implications if USEF states that a permitted piece of equipment, such as a spur, is a means to abuse. It would potentially open a grey area/slippery slope of looking into bits or other pieces of equipment which have the same consequences as raw and bleeding skin. In some sports, there is preventative equipment to address a concern such as belly bands.

Council - Member Services

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/28/2023

Draft 1: The Council members vehemently support equine welfare and safety and feel that in the case of raw, broken or bleeding skin, and/or excessive use of spurs, the current rules, both in the GR Chapter and throughout the various breed or discipline rules, already address the appropriate action to take making this rule change unnecessary. The Council members noted that raw, broken or bleeding skin on a horse's side can also be caused by many things that are not related to the use of spurs and wouldn't otherwise be considered abuse. Therefore, they felt that raw, broken or bleeding skin due to the use of spurs may be better addressed by elimination of the competitor.

Council - Natl Breed & Discipline

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/03/2023

Dressage

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/27/2023

Draft 1: We approve in principle the intent of the rule, however we are concerned that a horse with an old scar, might be interpreted by some as being raw. We also believe the enforcement of this rule would be more effective if the wording was changed to 'evidence of raw, broken, or bleeding skin in the area a spur would be worn' because the current wording would allow elimination only if spurs were being worn at the time raw, broken or bleeding skin was discovered.

Driving

Draft 1: No Action 03/28/2023

Friesian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/30/2023

Hackney

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/26/2023

Human and Equine, Safety & Welfare

Jumper

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/28/2023

Draft 1: The JSC's comments are for the GR and JP rules only. Including this wording in the General Rules for Cruelty and Abuse could lead to not being able to use whips or spurs. The JSC would approve JP 102 (both 1.b and 2) if the wording was changed to "and/or evidence of blood resulting from the use of spurs".

Morgan

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/28/2023

National Hunter Committee

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/14/2023

Draft 1: The committee feels that there is already language in the rulebook that addresses bleeding skin.

National Show Horse

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/04/2023

Natl Breed & Disciplines Council - Advisory

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/27/2023

ParaEquestrian

Paso Fino

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/26/2023

Roadster

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/26/2023

Saddle Seat Eq

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/24/2023

Shetland

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/05/2023

USDF

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 04/07/2023

Draft 1: USDF agrees with the intent of the RCP. However, we believe the wording is problematic as it can be difficult to "prove" the raw, broken, bleeding skin is caused by spurs. If someone is causing injury from spurs, they can simply remove them and it would be difficult if not impossible to prove that the injuries were caused by spurs.

USHJA

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 05/15/2023

Draft 1: Unnecessary since better spur language already exists in the rulebook.

Veterinary

Welsh

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/06/2023

Western Committee

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/29/2023

Draft 1: The committee was concerned with the “raw” wording and how stewards will be able to tell if a raw area was caused by spurs or by other factors. At larger shows, the vet can be consulted, but at many shows, the vet is not on the grounds. The committee felt that the benefit of doubt should be considered with this rule.

Western Dressage

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/29/2023

[...]

5. Any action(s) against a horse by a competitor, ***coach, groom, trainer***, or an exhibitor, which are deemed excessive by a Federation judge, Federation steward, technical delegate, or competition veterinarian, in the competition ring or anywhere on the competition grounds ***or evidence of action(s) described above on a horse on competition grounds*** may be punished by official warning or elimination ~~which may be deemed appropriate by the Show Committee~~. Such action(s) could include, but are not limited to excessive ***or inappropriate*** use of ***equipment, including but not limited to*** the whip or spurs. ***Evidence may include raw, bleeding, or irritated skin, or welts consistent with excessive use or inappropriate use of equipment.***